

# Driving Information for Military Personnel in California



## DRIVER'S LICENSE

### Military Vehicle

Civilian license not required. Operator must have a military driver's license in possession.

### Privately-owned Vehicle

- *California resident on active duty* - must have in possession a current California driver's license.
- *Nonresident on active duty* - must have in possession either a current California driver's license or a valid license issued by the military person's state of residence.
- *Dependents* - must have in possession a current driver's license issued by either California or the person's state of residence.



► *Minor dependents* - Minors between 16 and 18 who are California residents must have in their possession a valid California provisional license or a valid California license. Nonresident minors must have in their possession a valid license from their state of residence and a Nonresident Minor's Certificate issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

► *Motorcyclists* - military personnel and dependents must possess either a Class M California driver's license or a license from the state of residence. The out-of-state license must be endorsed for motorcycle operation if required by the issuing state. Drivers who want to obtain a California Class M license must take written and riding skills tests.

► *Former duty station* - If you obtained a driver's license in the state of a former duty station (other than California) it must be replaced with one issued by California or your state of residence within 10 days of entering California. A written test is always required, but the Department of Motor Vehicles usually will not require a driving test.

### Lost or Expired Driver's License

If a California resident loses his or her license while stationed in another state or country, the driver can get a replacement at any DMV office when he returns here. For a lost license, no test is necessary. For a renewal, the written test must be taken. The driving test normally is not required.

### California's Graduated Driver License

Once a teen gets a provisional license, the following conditions apply:

#### FIRST YEAR RESTRICTIONS

- Shall not drive between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. unless accompanied and supervised by a licensed driver who is the parent/guardian, a licensed driver who is 25 years of age or older, or a certified driving instructor.
- Shall not transport passengers who are under the age of 20 unless accompanied and supervised by a licensed driver who is the parent/guardian, a licensed driver who is 25 years of age or older, or a certified driving instructor.

\*The following exceptions apply:

- Medical necessity
- Employment necessity
- School-authorized activities
- Parental consent
- Emancipated minor

Each exception requires the appropriate documentation.



## GENERAL RULES OF THE ROAD

### Safety Belt Laws

All persons riding in a motor vehicle must be buckled up, even if the vehicle is registered in another state.

The safety belt laws apply to passengers riding in the back of pickup trucks or in campers with shells. These passengers must be secured in federally-approved after-market seats equipped with safety belts.

Children from birth until four years of age and weighing 40 pounds must be properly secured in a child restraint that meets federal safety standards. Children up to six years of age or up to 60 pounds must be secured in a booster seat that meets federal safety standards.

### Sleepy Drivers

To stay alert, pull off at the nearest highway exit or rest stop and take a break every 100 miles or every two hours.

### If You Are In a Collision

Pull out of traffic lanes if there are no injuries. Show your driver's license, registration and insurance information to the other driver.

File an SR-1 collision report with the DMV within 10 days if someone was injured or the damage was over \$500.

## CHECK AHEAD FOR ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Road info from California telephones  
**1-800-427-7623 (ROAD)**

California road info from outside the state  
**1-916-445-1534**

On the Internet  
[www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov)  
[www.chp.ca.gov](http://www.chp.ca.gov)



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## GENERAL RULES OF THE ROAD



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## DRIVER'S LICENSE and REGISTRATION



## INSURANCE

Every driver or motor vehicle owner in California **MUST** have vehicle insurance with a **MINIMUM** coverage of \$15/30 thousand liability and \$5,000 property damage insurance or a surety bond in the same amounts.



## REGISTRATION

All motorists in California must carry a registration certificate.

### Out-of-State Vehicles

It is necessary to carry the registration certificate for your vehicle if your home state requires that it be carried.

Out-of-state registration is valid if the owner is a member of the US armed forces or the spouse of a member and the vehicle is currently registered in the owner's state of residence or last duty station.

Out-of-state registration is **NOT** valid if a military member purchases a vehicle from a nonresident, unless the vehicle is immediately registered in the purchaser's state of residence or California.

- **Nonresident military registration** -- Active duty members and spouses may register their vehicles in California under a special Vehicle Code provision at a reduced fee provided the member or spouse is listed as the primary owner.

### Registration and Smog Laws

A car registered in another state that has no smog devices is legal to drive in California as long as it is equipped as required in the other state.

Vehicles are prohibited from emitting excessive exhaust and will be cited for air pollution, even if the car is registered in another state.

All new unregistered motor vehicles that are brought into California whose odometers read less than 7,500 miles must meet smog requirements and must be equipped with a California emission system before they can be registered.\*

- **New Vehicles** -- a new vehicle that was previously registered in your state of residence or last state of active military duty does not have to be equipped with a California emission system.

- **Used Vehicles** -- Most used vehicles previously registered in another state must meet California's emission standards before registration will be issued.

## VEHICLE TAXES

A sales (use) tax will be required when registering a vehicle purchased overseas with the **INTENT** of using it in California.



## SMOG CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

- **Selling a Vehicle** -- If you sell a vehicle in California, you must furnish the purchaser with certification that the vehicle meets California emission standards.

Imported vehicles from another country must meet both California Air Resources Board and federal EPA/ DOT requirements before they can be registered in California.

*\* There may be some exceptions to the above information. For more specifics about California smog requirements, you can call the California Air Resources Board at 1-800-242-4450.*

## EQUIPMENT

### Muffler and Exhaust

No modifications are allowed to increase or amplify the noise from your vehicle.

Vehicle must be equipped with an adequate exhaust system to prevent any unusual or excessive noise.

### Tinted Windows

Only windows that can be coated with "after market" tinting are those located **BEHIND** the driver's seat or front seat.

Any tinting, regardless of how light, is illegal on front side windows, wind wings and windshield.

If the back window is tinted, the vehicle must be equipped with outside mirrors on the left and right.

### Suspension

Raised suspension on a vehicle **CANNOT** exceed the legal height limitations which are based on the "gross vehicle weight rating".

Call any California Highway Patrol office for information before you change the height of your vehicle.

### Parking Lights

It is unlawful at any time to drive with only parking lights on.



# DUI LAWS

**It is unlawful for any person who is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or drug, or under the combined influence of any alcoholic beverage and drug, to drive a vehicle.**

**Implied Consent** -- Any person who has been granted the privilege of driving a motor vehicle in California is presumed to have given implied consent to law enforcement to conduct chemical testing of the motorist's blood or breath.

**0.08 DUI Law** -- Any person driving a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs is in violation of the law, as is anyone driving with a blood alcohol reading of 0.08% or higher is in violation of the law.

**Truckers' DUI** -- It is illegal for a driver to operate a commercial vehicle with a blood alcohol reading of 0.04% or higher. (An operator will be put out of service for 24 hours with a reading of 0.01% or higher.)

### Underage DUI

**California's Zero Tolerance law** provides that a driver under 21 years of age with a blood alcohol reading of 0.01% or higher on a Preliminary Alcohol Screening (PAS) device may have his license revoked or suspended.

**A driver under 21** with a blood alcohol reading of 0.05% or higher is subject to arrest and license suspension or revocation.

### Open Container

**It is unlawful** for an owner or driver to keep an open container of alcohol in a vehicle except in the trunk or in some other area out of the immediate control of the occupants.

**It is also unlawful** for passengers to possess an open container of alcohol out of the immediate control of passengers.